

Testimony of

Dr. Gilead Lancaster

Public Health Committee

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Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and members of the public Health Committee, my name is Dr. Gilead Lancaster. I am the director of Non-Invasive Cardiology at Bridgeport Hospital, an Associate Clinical Professor of Medicine at Yale and the President of the Connecticut Chapter of the American College of Cardiology- an organization that represents most of the doctors and nurses that treat heart patients in Connecticut. Our national organization, the American College of Cardiology, was an innovator of evidence based medicine with the development of medical guidelines and appropriate use criteria for tests- tools that are now the backbone of quality healthcare around the world.

I am before you today to testify in support of **SB 56: AN ACT CONCERNING PULSE OXIMETRY SCREENING FOR NEWBORN INFANTS**. In 2008, the United States Health and Human Services Secretary's Advisory Committee on Heritable Disorders in Newborns and Children (SACHDNC) was authorized by Congress to provide guidance to the Secretary about which conditions should be included in newborn screening and how systems should be developed to assure appropriate screening and follow-up care.

In 2010 the committee recommended that critical congenital cyanotic heart disease be added to the recommended uniform screening panel based on findings from a comprehensive review of the available evidence. The goal is to identify those newborns with structural heart defects usually associated with hypoxia (low oxygen saturation in the blood) in the newborn period with this simple and relatively inexpensive screening device called pulse oximetry.

Pulse oximetry is a noninvasive test that estimates the percentage of hemoglobin in blood that is saturated with oxygen. The device itself is relatively inexpensive and reusable, and many hospitals use pulse oximetry as a standard of care in their newborn nurseries.

We believe that many newborn lives could be saved by earlier detection and treatment of congenital cyanotic heart disease if hospitals were required to perform this simple, noninvasive newborn screening method; and so we, the American College of Cardiology urge that this bill be adopted.

I am happy to answer any questions. Thank you.